



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

8 CHARGED IN ORANGE COUNTY-BASED ALIEN SMUGGLING SCHEME *Suspects include proprietor of Anaheim travel agency*

SANTA ANA, Calif. – Eight members of an Orange County-based human smuggling ring suspected of bringing as many as 100 undocumented aliens a month into the Southland have been indicted following a two-year investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Among those charged in the case is the organization's alleged ringleader, Emilio Mayorales, 42, who was arrested at his Anaheim residence yesterday. Also under indictment is the proprietor of the Aero Paris travel agency in Anaheim, Mauro Perez, 49. According to the indictment, Perez obtained plane tickets for the smuggling organization's clients, knowing the tickets were being used by illegal aliens.

The eight suspects are named in a five-count federal indictment unsealed late yesterday accusing them of conspiracy to transport and harbor illegal aliens. One of the defendants, Jose Luis de la Rosa-Hernandez, 34, is also charged with money laundering.

Four of the eight suspects were taken into custody yesterday morning by ICE agents here in the Southland. A fifth defendant was arrested by ICE in Tucson. Two of the accused are still being sought. The eighth defendant was arrested by U.S. Customs and Border Protection Border Patrol agents in Arizona earlier on unrelated alien smuggling charges.

"With this week's arrests, we have dismantled a major human smuggling network operating in Orange and San Bernardino Counties," said Kumar Kibble, assistant special agent-in-charge of ICE investigations in Orange County. "As this case shows, ICE is targeting not only the criminal networks directly responsible for the smuggling activity, but also those businesses that provide logistical support that helps further this highly lucrative illegal enterprise."

During yesterday's operation, ICE agents conducted searches at locations in Anaheim, San Juan Capistrano, and Ontario. At an Ontario trailer park where the organization is suspected of operating a drop house, investigators recovered laminating machines and other materials frequently used to make fraudulent documents.

According to the indictment, the defendants arranged for aliens to be smuggled into the United States across the Arizona-Mexico border and transported to Southern California. After arriving in the Southland, the majority of aliens were taken to “drop houses” in San Bernardino County where they remained until the defendants made arrangements for final payment of the smuggling fees or additional transportation.

The six defendants who are in custody are expected to make their initial appearance in federal court in Santa Ana later this morning. They face a maximum penalty of ten years in prison on the conspiracy to transport and harbor violation. The money laundering charge carries a maximum sentence of 20 years.

Below is a list of the eight defendants named in the indictment:

- Emilio Mayoraes, 42, of Anaheim – allegedly supervised the smuggling operation;
- Mauro Perez, 49, of Yorba Linda - proprietor of Aero Paris travel agency;
- Jose Luis de la Rosa-Hernandez, a.k.a. “Chilango,” 34, of Upland – charged with money laundering and smuggling violations, allegedly directed the payment of smuggling fees to the organization’s guides and drivers;
- Andres Zarate-Morales, 46, of San Juan Capistrano – suspected of providing vehicles for the organization and serving as guide.
- Alfredo Jamie-Melgar, 38 - apprehended by the Border Patrol prior to yesterday’s operation. Allegedly served as a driver for the organization;
- Augustine Osuna-Ruelas, 42, of Tucson, Arizona – suspected of furnishing the organization vehicles and serving as a driver for loads of smuggled aliens;
- Antonio Mazari-Mendez, 32, fugitive;
- Daniel Martin Felix-Caraveo, 21, fugitive.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.